

Samuel T. DeFord,  
An Address

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AN

# ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE BRUTUS FIRE SOCIETY,

IN

NEWBURYPORT,

AT THEIR ANNUAL MEETING, JAN. 6, 1831.

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BY SAMUEL T. DEFORD.

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“All that can be required of an individual in a righteous cause is to exert his best efforts,—if these fail, then he is blameless.”—McKENNEY.

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THE free institutions of our country,—the high, the invaluable privileges enjoyed by every member of our great and happy republic,—the exalted station which that republic sustains in the rank of nations; and the universal respect and admiration, not unmingled with envy, that she elicits from even the highest potentates of the old world, though she herself is yet in the freshness and greenness of youth;—these are topics, which are new to none of us. They have formed subjects for the most eloquent discourses and debates; the most brilliant poems and essays, that have breathed from the lips or flowed from the pens of our highest and most gifted fellow-citizens, almost from the hour, that we became a free people, unto the present period.

Where is the child that does not associate the idea of his country's glory with his first and earliest recollections,—who has not heard it in the roar of the cannon, in the pealing bells, and in the loud shouts of gratulation and joy which have ever signalized the glad return of his country's independence? Where is the father, who has not instilled into the youthful bosom of his son, that enthusiastic devotion to the cause of American liberty, which burns in his own;—or where is the man, of whatever rank, who does not deem it his highest duty to evince upon all occasions, and in every situation, that warm attachment, I may say veneration, for the institutions of his native land, so peculiarly the pride and boast of every free born American?

But strange as it may appear, with all these inducements for the exercise of gratitude and contentment, we find too many among us, who, while they apparently glory in the name of an American, and seem to cherish a desire for that continued union and spirit of conciliation among the great body of the people, which are the surest bulwarks and safeguards of their liberties;—I say that there are too many among us, who, while they profess to be actuated by these considerations, are in reality sowing the seeds of

discontent and animosity, which will ultimately spring up into a harvest of civil discord and strife, unless means be adopted to arrest the growing evil, ere it arrive at maturity.

The aristocratic and jealous spirits of our father land, who would blast the increasing honors, that cluster around our country's name, dare to predict the speedy downfall of her rising fame; dare even to predict the limits beyond which she shall no longer be hailed as freest of the free.—And do we not ourselves give just cause for such speculations? Do we not put into the hands of our enemies, the very weapons which they use to destroy our fair reputation?

Are not the many advantages which we possess over other nations, converted to sources of daily increasing evil, even by those whose aim it should be to turn these advantages to the highest possible good? The unrestricted freedom of our press; is it not fearful to remark the abuses, the scandalous abuses to which it leads? Who can behold with an indifferent eye, the labyrinth of error, bitter hatred and animosity, into which the uncandid, nay, more than uncandid, the grossly libellous discussions which fill the columns of our newspapers, must inevitably plunge us; and who is sufficiently daring to foretell how far they shall tend to the subversion of our most valuable rights and privileges?

All men were born free and equal. This fundamental article of our Constitution was designed to promote that feeling of self-respect, and honest ambition, which should ever be encouraged in every individual who bears the name of a freeman. And it is a sentiment that is capable of producing the most beneficial results to the whole community. But if it be true that all men are born free and equal, is it not also true, is it not, indeed, a self-evident proposition, that all men cannot be endowed with equal talents, equal acquirements, or equal advantages, and that, consequently, they cannot, or ought not to aspire to equally exalted stations in society? Most unhappily for our present peace and good fellowship, and for our future prospects as a nation, a spirit of darkness is abroad among us, spreading far and wide the baleful contagion of jealousy, rancor, and all the unholy passions, which agitate the human breast. It is impossible to compute the amount of injury, which the diffusion of such a spirit is capable of accomplishing, in



a country like ours. In what does our national strength consist? Is it in a standing army, whose imposing array should be sufficient to awe into trembling servility to the powers that be, even the man who is conscious of the rectitude of his purposes; but who would not then dare openly to avow it? Is it in a vigilant and watchful police, whose very existence proves the utter insecurity of the government it is designed to strengthen? Is not our only hope of safety, founded upon the firm principle, unshaken integrity, and disinterested patriotism of the great mass of our body politic; upon feelings of kindness, of good faith, and unsuspecting confidence between the various members of it? Are not these the very essence of our national security; and to overthrow them, is it not to overthrow the very foundations of our government itself? I think no candid and ingenuous mind can deny the truth of this. No man who has the best good of his country at heart, can view, with any other feelings than those of deprecation, the attempts which have been made, and are still making, to disturb the tranquillity and union of sentiment and action, so important to our public and individual interests, by striving to awaken in any class of the community, an envious, discontented and jealous spirit towards any other class, as being more wealthy, more liberally educated, or as following professional pursuits.

Far be it from me to assert, that the power of improving those talents, which, in a greater or less degree, are possessed by each one of us, is confined to the educated classes alone. Or that they only, are capable of filling high offices of trust and honor, to the utter exclusion of those, whose destiny has been cast in a less fortunate scale than theirs, as it regards the means of acquiring that fund of knowledge and varied information, which are essentially necessary to the successful discharge of the great and responsible duties that necessarily devolve upon those who occupy the high places in the temple of fame. I should be the first to scorn a man who would draw such a line—who would use one iota of his influence to cramp the aspirations or crush the laudable ambition of an energetic and lofty mind, in whatever sphere of life it may be found. I cannot surely be accused of undue sympathy with the wealthy, or professional man. I have acquired neither riches nor honor in the pursuit of law, theology, or physic. I am a *mechanic*

and a working-man, and I glory in the title. I deem it a qualification too respectable, too valuable, to be sunk to the low and degraded station to which some would debase it. What is a mechanic, and a New England mechanic peculiarly, but another word, for all that is deserving of respect and consideration? It is not in our favored land, that the industrious, sober-minded, upright man is to be stigmatized with the epithet of degraded, because he earns an honest subsistence for himself and family, by the labor of his hands. *This* is not the country where he has occasion to fear oppression and scorn, from the overbearing and all-controlling influence of a monied aristocracy. We all know, we cannot be blind to the fact, that we have no aristocracy: nothing that can by possibility bear the name. Let us look around us and see of what is composed this aristocracy, which is now made so convenient a channel, into which to pour the overflowings of fretful, ill-tempered and selfish minds. If it mean our rich men, surely, nothing can be more unjust, than the use of such an opprobrious appellation as applied to them. How have the great proportion of our wealthy citizens acquired their envied riches? Not from the coffers of a long line of purse proud and haughty progenitors; coffers filled from the grindings of the poor, the orphan, and the widow. They have been acquired by the most painful labor, anxiety, and watchfulness.—They are the careful earnings of a toil-spent life, and their possessors once numbered themselves even among the class of those very working-men, individuals among whom are now raising against them the cry of aristocracy.

Nor do we see them despising the station they thus honorably occupied, and from whence they have arisen to rank and influence—not by useless repinings at the allotments of Providence, not by suspicion of their fellow-men—but by active, untiring industry, patience and frugality. And is it just, is it consistent with the principles of a noble and generous nature, that men who have borne the heat and burden of the day, should receive as their reward only ill-founded, jealous and malevolent envy, merely for having succeeded in the well-fought and hard won race for competency and ease? I conceive that there is offered to mechanics and other working-men, no greater encouragement or in-



ducement to persevere in honorable exertion, than the fact that so many from their own ranks, and by means within their own reach, have prosperously achieved the purposes of their labors, in being enabled to spend their declining years in freedom from embarrassment, to rear their children, to honor and usefulness,—and to contribute by the generous expenditure of their rightful gains, in meliorating the condition and providing for the wants of the poor and needy.

The desire of accumulating wealth is one from which no man is exempt: and, if not carried to excess, is one of which no man should be ashamed.—Nay more, to endeavor to lay up for ourselves an easy competency against the hour of sickness or old age, and to make a provision for our offspring, is an imperious duty—to neglect which, were to be worse than an infidel. But let no one dream that any lasting advantage is to be obtained at the expense of all the manly and disinterested qualities of which our nature is susceptible. And what have we to fear of overbearing self-sufficiency on the part of our merchants and tradesmen? I grant that the mercantile man is much more likely to secure to himself a large fortune, in a short period, than if pursuing any other employment. He who risks much, may hope to gain in the same proportion.

A merchant hazards his all upon the success or failure of a great speculation. If that speculation prove successful, his fortune is made;—if it fail, he is lost, irretrievably lost. Therefore, it is most idle for the less gainful, because less bold and daring adventurer for the favors of fortune, to indulge in such apprehensions of the influence of that man, whose situation is, in the nature of things, precarious; who may be in comparative affluence to-day, and to-morrow, by circumstances over which he has no control, and which he cannot foresee, may become a bankrupt. The uncertainty that attends even his surest enterprises, forbids him to assume the tone of authority or dictation over another man, who, to-morrow, may stand far above him, in those very possessions upon which he prides himself. And is it true, that even where such uncertainty does not exist, that, where the capital is too great to admit of total failure, we actually find any instance of attempts to encroach upon the rights of others, that do not imme-



diately receive the condemnation they deserve; and can even fear that they will be capable of exerting an influence, prejudicial to the welfare of any portion of the community?

But if the charge of aristocracy rests not with our monied men, nor with those engaged in the acquisition of wealth by traffic, where, let me ask, is there another class to whom it may be applied? Can it be that of the learned professions? Is there any thing in the conversation, the bearing, the daily habits of our clergymen, our lawyers, or physicians, inconsistent with the purest principles of republican equality? I will venture to answer that there is not. And I call upon all those whom I now address, to say in truth and sincerity, whether there is any just or reasonable ground for such a charge. This very society, to which we belong, is it not composed of literary, scientific and professional men, as well as of those who are devoted to mechanical pursuits;—and can any one member of this society assert, that we do not all stand upon a level of perfect equality; or that we do not exercise equal influence, and enjoy equal privileges? The same may be asked with regard to every association of men among us, formed for purposes of general utility; and I think I may safely affirm that the answer in every instance would be the same. It is not true that our professional men claim for themselves a superiority over others, founded merely upon the accidental differences of situation and standing in life. There are weak men in every profession, and there may be individuals, that may warrant an exception to this assertion. The lawyer cannot be supposed to entertain such reflections, amid the harassing and perplexing cares and anxieties, the troubles and vexations that daily and hourly attend his practice. Nor is it amid the solemn and affecting scenes of a court of justice, where life and death hang as it were, upon the decision of his own lips, that the most learned and eloquent advocate can be believed to indulge feelings of arrogant superiority, or vain-glorious pride. Neither is it to the medical profession, that we are to look for these traits of character. What room is there for the indulgence of them, in the peculiarly absorbing and self denying occupations of such a life. Is it in the chambers of disease and suffering, around the bed of death, or in the hovels of poverty, where his charity as well as his humanity is so often felt and acknow-

ledged, that the anxious and assiduous physician feels the importance of worldly honors and worldly distinctions? And least of all should it be deemed that a clergyman is influenced by any feeling or desire, so utterly inconsistent with the doctrines he inculcates, or the principles which he is desirous of promoting. This is a profession little adapted to swell the pride of man, or to raise him in self-estimation, above his fellow man, whom he esteems, equally with himself, entitled to all the privileges and favors due to the children of the same great parent. The consciousness of having amassed a splendid fortune in the discharge of these arduous duties, independent of any other pursuit, falls to the lot of few, very few, of our community. The number of physicians, clergymen or lawyers who have acquired such a fortune, by their profession alone, is wonderfully small.

They cannot, then, make boast of their riches, or domineer over the people, and how can the charge of aristocracy rest with them? And if not with them, I ask again, where does it affix itself? Not among the occupants of our National or State offices.—Not among the legislators in our halls of Congress;—for who does not know that these are paths which are freely open to every individual who possesses the talents, the desire, or the leisure to pursue them, whatever may be the particular employment by which he subsists?

No, my friends, it is a great mistake to suppose, that we have any other aristocracy, than that of merit, and this is one, which we should all be proud to acknowledge as existing in our country, and endeavor by every means in our power to maintain its influence.

But although it be admitted that there is no particular class of men, to whom belongs the exclusive right of aspiring to all high and honorable stations; it cannot be admitted, that there are not a class of men more peculiarly fitted to fill those stations than others.

The man who has been educated in literary pursuits, who has received every advantage of education which can be afforded him, and whose life has been spent in the acquirement of learning and science, is certainly better fitted, all other things being equal, to promote the interests of his country by his intellectual powers, than that man can be, who has been denied those advantages; who



has neither time nor opportunity for acquiring them, and consequently cannot expect equal success in the higher walks of life.

Let me not be misunderstood.—Let it not be presumed, that I deny to any class the honor of being useful to their country.—All virtuous men may be highly useful; but not all in the same way. It does not necessarily follow, that, because a man may be eminent in one sphere, he should be so in all; that because he may be a proficient in one art, he should be acquainted with every other. It is true, that by diligent and constant exertion, the possessor of five talents, may make those talents ten; it is true, that the farmer, the mechanic, the mariner or laborer, may rise to the most elevated place in the gift of the nation. There is nothing impossible in all this,—there is nothing objectionable in it, nay it is a thing to be desired. But to arrive at such a result, there are things absolutely necessary to be possessed of, otherwise such a transition would be utterly impossible. A man, in order to rise to great distinction, must possess a strong and well balanced mind, to overcome the difficulties that will impede his progress; talents to secure the necessary information which shall enable him to keep pace with his rivals in fame and ambition; a vigorous intellect, capable of distinguishing the best interests of his fellow men; and a well regulated judgment to direct and control his exertions in their behalf. And to all these natural gifts, must be added extensive attainments, only to be acquired by a course of unremitting, laborious study. They must be acquired by many a sacrifice of ease and comfort; many a wearisome day and sleepless night. And for all this, has every individual in the community the requisite leisure, even admitting that he has the requisite power. True it is that the hard working mechanic full well knows how to sacrifice his ease and comfort, has passed many sleepless nights and wearisome days; but it is to lay up something for the hour of need;—it is to clothe and feed a dependent family, that he makes these sacrifices; and vainly would he seek to find time or health, for the exercise of severe intellectual labor, added to the bodily toil, which necessity obliges him to undergo, even where he is eminently qualified by nature for such a task. He must take from rest and repose, absolutely necessary to the preservation of a healthful frame of mind and body, the



moments to be devoted to literary pursuits. The midnight hour, and even the early dawn must find him watching;—and can he accomplish all this with the hope or expectation of preserving in their full vigor, his bodily and mental faculties? Were there a situation in life, either exalted or humble, which could be filled creditably or honorably, without exertion or labor, then indeed might the wish to occupy it be consistently entertained by all men. But there is no such situation, and the fact that the indolent and inactive man can seldom rise above mediocrity, proves there is not. Immunity from toilsome exertion can, least of all, be claimed by those who have arrived at the highest honors. Intellectual exertion must be acknowledged, as equally, if not MORE, painfully laborious, than any other; and we are constantly reminded in the sudden and premature departure from life of those engaged in them, that they are far more incompatible with the enjoyment of that invaluable blessing, health. And if the man of brilliant talents and extraordinary mental powers, receives the homage of admiration and unbounded respect, and is raised to situations the most elevated in society; I regard him only as receiving the just reward of his arduous warfare,—a reward to which he claims a right, by all those principles, by which we ought to be if we are not, governed.

I deem it not consistent with these principles that, because a man is well educated, and has been favored with the endowments of fortune; that because he possesses great natural abilities, and a richly cultivated and gifted understanding, he must, for that cause, be deprived of all opportunity of rising in the world, and of bestowing upon his countrymen, the benefits of an enlightened and intelligent mind. The laborer is entitled to his hire, and when his work is accomplished, it would be hard indeed to deprive him of his just recompense. So the laborer in the intellectual field, equally deserves the just reward of *his* well executed task. And that reward he will and must receive,—and vain will be the endeavor to deprive him of it.

Mere advantages of birth or wealth, will not, of themselves ensure either praise or renown. But talent is all-commanding; talent will exercise an invincible sway; and as soon might we hope to quell the proud waves of the ocean, as bid the conscious

possessor of such a talisman, resign the brilliant hopes it opens to him.

Nothing is more absurd, nothing indicates a greater ignorance of the whole law of nature, than to suppose, that all men can be equally fitted for all conditions. Contrarieties must exist, and without them, the very machinery of government, society itself must come to naught.

But, although, we need the profound and skilful statesman, to watch over our political interests, and to place the fabric of just and equitable laws upon a firm foundation; the deeply learned and impartial jurist, to execute those laws in such a manner as shall best advance the general good; the independent capitalist, to contribute by the circulation of his wealth to our prosperity, and consequent safety and happiness as a people;—yet the statesman, the jurist, the capitalist, has equally need of the support and countenance of those classes, which though they may be inferior to them in high and lofty attainments, in riches, or standing, are inferior to none, in proud self-respect, in virtuous resolution, and in the steady purpose [of maintaining inviolate their sacred and inviolable rights. And to my view it is most deeply to be deplored, that feelings of jealous discontent should have arisen to subvert the better judgment of this portion of our population, and to lead them astray from the only course by which their best interests and final prosperity are to be secured. To the candid and unprejudiced mind it needs but a moment's reflection, to be convinced of the fallacy of every argument, tending to show, that any American citizen has real cause to complain of injustice and oppression. That man is unjust to himself; he detracts from the respectability of his own character, who does not feel the truth of this remark.

Different spheres of action, different duties and responsibilities, are the natural and necessary allotments of different ranks in society; but there is not one individual in either of these ranks, who does not or may not receive that just share of public and private respect and confidence, which his merits deserve, who does not or may not exercise his full weight of influence, proportioned, of necessity, to the power and means, that he possesses of advancing the general good.

To improve the mind, to enlarge the understanding, and to



acquire those sources of information, which shall contribute to our individual happiness, and fit us for the best discharge of the duties and obligations which we owe to those around us, in whatever sphere of life we may move, is denied to none of us. There are advantages that we all possess in common, and he only deserves or receives censure, who neglects these advantages, in order to grasp at those which are attainable by few, without the risk of losing the sure and certain benefits already in possession. The worthy and intelligent man, who chances to have been born, in that condition, which devolves upon him the necessity of earning his bread by the labor of his hands, ever meets with constant encouragement from those, who have been more highly favored in this respect than he. It is a fact, which none can deny, that if a mechanic, or any other laboring man is endowed with uncommon abilities, and with a desire to improve them, there is no assistance which he can ask, that is not cheerfully granted him; no praise or respect he can desire, that is not voluntarily bestowed upon him, by those very individuals, so falsely accused of entertaining towards him contemptuous and haughty feelings.

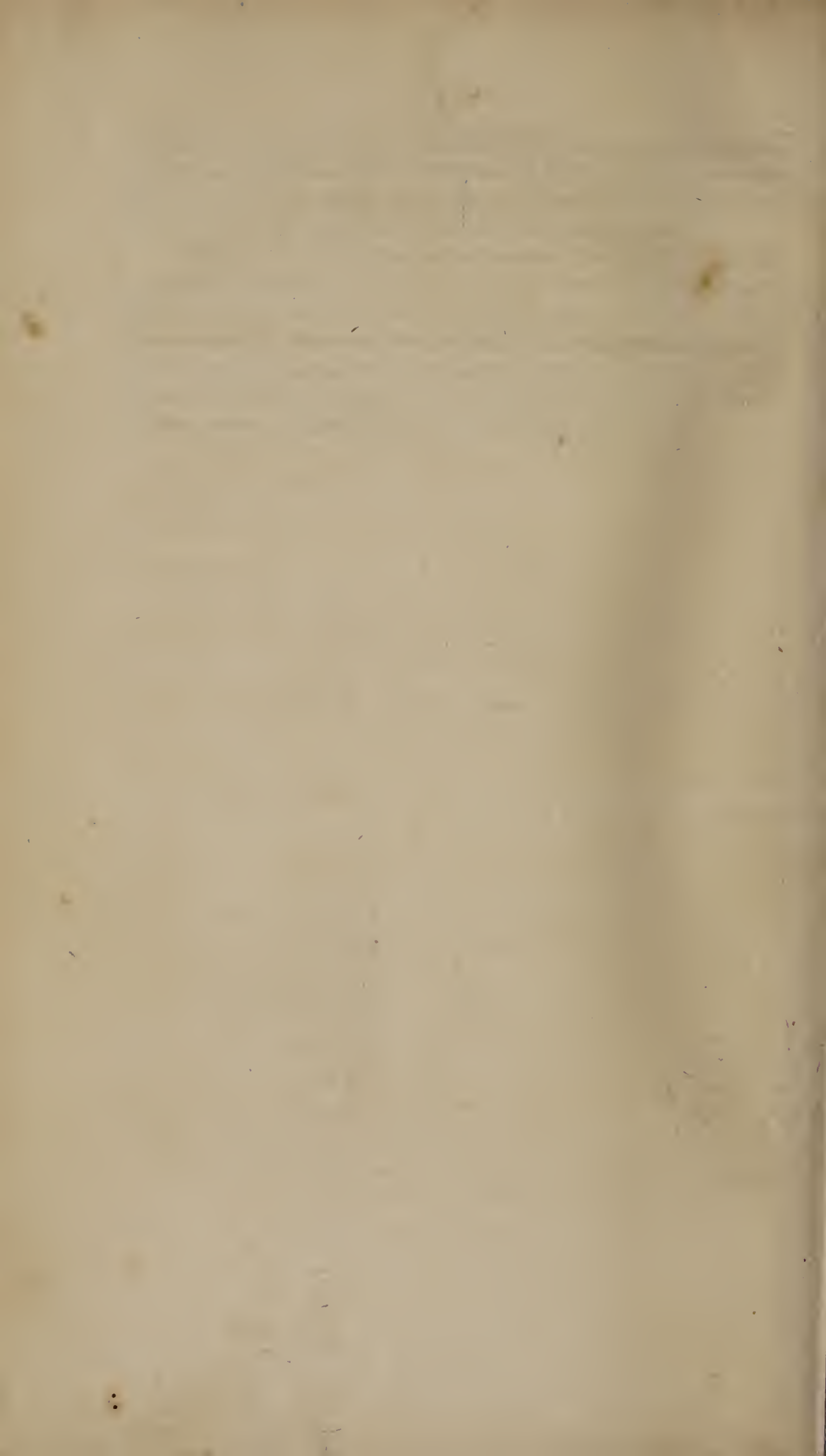
And while we are thus favored, as a people, above all others in the universe; while the most equal political and civil rights are enjoyed by all; and every man may sit under his own vine and fig-tree, without fear and without danger, is it not most ungrateful and unwise, to complain because every man cannot be first in rank and honor? While the selfish and purse-proud aristocrat, intent only upon self-aggrandizement, and unmindful alike of the rights and interests of the poor man, whom he has the power and the will to oppress and crush beneath his feet, is not known among us;—while the voice of an absolute monarch, cannot bid us bend to his powerful sway; or priestcraft and ignorance, close our eyes to the light of knowledge, or the blessings of freedom;—while no such curse is entailed upon us or our posterity, let us with feelings of grateful pride, acknowledge our manifold causes for thankfulness and contentment. Let it be our boast, that we are actuated by no motive, that we indulge in no wishes, that have not for their end the vital interests of our common country. Let us be happy in the consciousness, that when danger threatens



that country, it is to her yeomanry that she must look for defence and safety, and that while intelligence and resolution, kindness and concord are preserved among her sons, she may defy the united wrath of her bitterest foes to prevail against her.

But if we are not determined upon such a course, if we will not enter heart and soul into the firm resolve to set our faces against every endeavor to awaken disunion and evil passions between man and man; it needs not the gift of prophecy to foretell, that the splendid destinies of republican America must be cut off forever, and her now glorious name be numbered with the recollection of those things, that have been; but are not.







# INTERESTING CORRESPONDENCE.



## LETTER FROM MR. RICHARD RUSH,

ON THE POLICY

OF THE

## AMERICAN SYSTEM,

IN ANSWER TO THE FOLLOWING :

PROVIDENCE, OCTOBER 30th, 1830.

RICHARD RUSH, Esq.

*Dear Sir:* The Subscribers are Commanders and Principal Owners of a Line of Packets between Providence, Rhode Island, and Philadelphia. Sixteen years last April, one of us commenced in the business with a sloop of 37 tons, occupying, on an average, full two months in making the trip both ways, with frequently much difficulty in procuring freight, particularly on the return voyage. It has, however, been gradually increasing, and now there are six schooners, averaging 70 tons; the arrangements of which are to depart once a week from each Port, and with abundant freight both ways for their full employment. It would be reasonable, we think, to estimate the property that is interchanged as exceeding \$1,500,000 annually. This arises much from the rapid advances which American Manufactures have made in Rhode Island and in its vicinity, and the great development of the mineral and agricultural products of your native State. The present favorable situation of the coasting and internal trade of the country, we consider has been greatly promoted by the efforts of yourself and your colleagues while in office, and peculiarly so while you were at the head of the Treasury Department.

Approving as we do of your public services, we take pleasure in notifying you of it now in your retirement; and having recently added a new vessel to our line, we have given her the name of "*THE RICHARD RUSH*."

Assuring you of our individual regard and esteem, we remain your friends and servants,

R. FARNUM,  
A. HALL,  
J. H. LANGLEYES,  
H. KILLEY,  
EDWARD HALL.

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WASHINGTON:

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## LETTER FROM MR. RUSH.

YORK, PENNSYLVANIA, Nov. 27, 1830.

GENTLEMEN: I received last week your letter of the 30th of October, in which you inform me that you are the commanders and principal owners of a line of Packets between Providence, Rhode Island, and Philadelphia; that sixteen years ago one of you commenced the establishment with a sloop of thirty-seven tons burthen, which occupied two months on an average, in making the trip, and that even that single vessel had often much difficulty in procuring freight; that now, the line has increased to six Schooners, averaging seventy tons each, whose arrangements are, to depart once a week for each port; that they have abundance of freight both ways for their full employment, and that it would not, in your opinion, be an unreasonable estimate of the property interchanged to say, that it exceeds one million five hundred thousand dollars annually. After stating these facts, you add your belief, that the increase of the trade has arisen from the rapid advancement which American manufactures have made in Rhode Island and its vicinity, and the great development of the mineral and agricultural products of this, my native State. You are also pleased to intimate, that, in your opinion, the present favorable situation of the coasting and internal trade of the country has been greatly promoted by the policy and measures pursued by myself and those with whom I was associated in the management of our public affairs, particularly whilst I was at the head of the Treasury; and that you have marked our approbation of that policy, by giving my name to one of your vessels.

Of the measures in question, I was, it is true, the decided and zealous advocate; but in ways far less prominent and at dates much less early, than others with whom I acted. Nevertheless for your approbation of the share I had in them, spontaneously offered by you as it has been, and coming to me here unexpectedly as it does, where I have neither power, nor patronage, nor desire for either, I am thankful. Offered in kindness, it is gratefully received. A testimonial so wholly unsolicited and unbought, is the more grateful, from the undoubted friendliness of its motive; as well as far the more valuable, from the character of the public feeling in which it originates. Speaking of the measures, as of those of others, which I merely seconded and approved, I will say of them, that every year will bring fresh proofs of their wisdom. It is the wisdom of time and experience. What are countries merely agricultural, but poverty stricken? If we want to see the greatest sum of riches, and power, and intelligence in nations, we must go to those where manufactures are carried on largely and effectually, in conjunction with agriculture and commerce; and where they have been encouraged by the laws, not neglected. We must go to France, to England, to the Netherlands, to Holland, to the best parts of Germany, the most enlightened and freest parts, not to Poland or the Cape of Good Hope. What a fact does your letter announce! The tonnage of a line of packets between Providence and Philadelphia, increased nearly twelve hundred per cent. in sixteen years! Let this fact be promulgated. It is better for our side than abstract disquisitions on the other from Mr. Huskisson, or from whomsoever they may come. And what is this trade, that in its regular progress, has called for such an increase of tonnage to carry it from port to port? I answer, the best of all trades, because consisting of wealth created, as well as diffused; and because its profits all centre at home. You ascribe the increase in part to the great development of the agricultural and mineral products of this State. You are right: And in this lies the paramount excellence of manufacturing industry; for when, but by a flourishing state of manufactures as one of the causes have we



ever seen the agricultural products of any country, or the mineral products, where nature has given the latter, fully, steadily, and permanently developed? It would be to look for an effect without its cause. What has made a garden of Belgium, but the industry of her manufacturers in her numerous towns, where the country produce always finds a ready and good sale. What heaps up the agricultural products of France, of Holland, of northern Italy, of England, of all the countries of Europe, that are the most powerful, if large ones, or the most prosperous, if small, but the regular demand for those products by the other productive and consuming classes that live in them; of which the manufacturing is, and always will be, the most important? But for the manufactures of Rhode Island and elsewhere, among ourselves, that have arisen within the last few years, what would have become of the products of the earth from this State of which you speak! They would have remained hidden in the earth. What European nation would have taken them? Not one. Our manufactures have increased the demand for the cotton of the south, in the same fair proportion; as well as the coasting tonnage necessary to carry it from the places of its growth, to the places where it is worked up. The demands of foreign commerce may, for a season, strain up the price, and the quantity, of agricultural products; but the nation that trusts to this as the only vent for them, is undone, or will have but a short-lived existence, or must be content with a humble rank in the world. The race of permanent opulence and renown, of commanding influence, of stable revenues, of steady and successful commerce at home and abroad, of high civilization, and even of durable freedom, is not the race that such a nation will ever run. No artisans like those of Paris will stand out in its annals, remarkable one day for the diversified labors with which they can enrich and adorn a magnificent metropolis; the next, for the sublime patriotism and invincible courage with which they can drive a tyrant from his throne.

I have mentioned Mr. Huskisson—let me not do so with injustice—still less with what may look like a sneer. His character is not the subject of it, however frankly I may deal with some of his opinions. His lamented death is still upon our hearts; and to me it has happened to have known his eminent private, as all knew his great public, value. Had he lived here he would have been with us, I am sure he would, on the doctrines of the Tariff. The proof is decisive. His mind was as practical as its range was wide and clear, on all subjects that he examined. Like his illustrious friend, the last great commoner who rose to the Premiership, he looked, whatever his plans, to the power and glory of England. They each nobly looked to this end, and each in his own way. Canning to her political glory; to her treaties, to her alliances, to her foreign policy; his eloquence, and his state papers, keeping within these orbits. Huskisson, to her commercial glory; to her shipping, her manufactures, to all her trade in detail, to her finances. Each had master minds, and they worked together, the aggrandizement of their country the bond of their affection. The latter, whilst he saw every thing upon the largest scale, could work in his details too with consummate skill. No complications, but he could disentangle; no tables of figures but he could set in order; no results that he could not render specious, if not make alluring. Grant him but his premises, which all had not the ability, and scarcely any the patience to scrutinize, and his conclusions followed of course. He tried to persuade them in France, that their abundant prosperity would become more abundant, if they would but give up their doctrine of protecting manufactures by the laws. It was a prejudice of other days; they ought to renounce it; they ought to admit British manufactures under low duties, or perhaps no duties at all; so Adam Smith thought all nations had better do; the English would then repeal their duties on French manufactures. By this policy, alone worthy of enlightened and great nations who saw their true interest, the



industry of both France and England would wonderfully shoot ahead. No longer would it be trammelled by the clogs of legislators; no longer be ruined by the nostrums of political doctors. But the French were unmoved. In the midst of all his positions and illustrations, of his expanded views and generous lectures, they remained unmoved. Whether it was their jealousy of their own manufactures that took the alarm, their blindness that could not see, their volatility that would not listen, or what—but no impression could be made upon them. They went on in the old way, and back he went to old England: but, patriot-like, nothing discouraged. A new hope started to his mind.

We, of this hemisphere, were under different circumstances, and to work he went in the task of schooling us. It was foolish in us to be running into this exploded error about trade, because we were a young nation. It had been time for France to abjure it, because she was an old nation. We were fools for adopting it, because we had plenty of land yet to settle, and but little capital; because our population was thin and labor dear. The French were fools for adhering to it, because there capital had long been accumulated, and skill required; they were a refined nation, a nation of the arts, where population was thick and labor cheap. So, we were young fools and old fools together. The keen optics of the Englishman, pointing his home telescope both ways, first across the channel and then across the Atlantic, saw, by the magical workings of its British glasses, the two nations exactly in the same lights. Each fitted, to a hair, all his new projects of repeal and enactment! They were to be submitted to Parliament, in his triple capacity, of Member for Liverpool, President of the Board of Trade, and enlightened advocate of free trade for all the world, upon equal terms.

But, what said he of Britain all this while? Of Britain, filled with her forges and looms, her steam power, her collieries, her blast furnaces, glaring, as with beacon fires, over whole divisions of her Island; of Britain, pointing to her Manchesters, her Sheffields, her Birminghams, her Congletons, her Woolverhamptons, and her hundred other towns, all connected with each other, and with her sea-ports, by superb artificial ways of water or land, where natural ones failed; of Britain, confident at all points in her manufacturing superiority, and towering in her manufacturing strength; of Britain, the sons of whose very manufacturers class with the nobles of her land; who are receiving at their Lulworth castles the royal fugitives of France, and sheltering them with a princely munificence; of this Britain what did he say? Why, let us see. It may give us instruction. To some it may be new—by others forgotten. Here it is. He said, that he was not afraid to recommend (his very word) the proposed reduction of duties on foreign manufactures coming into England, as an inducement to other nations to lessen theirs on British manufactures going abroad, well knowing that besides the monopoly, almost total, which British manufacturers enjoyed at home, immense as it was, they were sent, at the very moment he was speaking, “in a proportion far exceeding the supply from any other country, to the general markets of the world.” Very like our condition, indeed! I quote from his great speech of 1825, in which he first laid down his doctrines of free trade; not a newspaper report of it, but one believed to have been corrected by himself. I need no stronger proof, though I think there is enough besides, that had Mr. Huskisson filled our Treasury, instead of presiding over the English Board of Trade, been in Congress instead of Parliament, adapting himself to the maxims of a different sphere, he would have been the constant advocate of the laws in favor of manufactures. His strong mind would never have doubted their constitutionality, any more than our illustrious Madison’s. He would have pleaded their cause as necessary to the getting rid of the prejudices of other days; as necessary towards enlarging the demand for our products, grown slack after the peace of Europe; to the more



sure as well as comprehensive operations, by and by, of our foreign commerce, by diversifying as well as multiplying its objects; to the ultimate stability of our finances, in danger, on the first political storm, of being shattered to pieces, whilst depending upon nothing but duties on imported goods, and those chiefly British, for keeping them whole. After this fashion would he have pleaded, I have no doubt, though far better. He would have added, that those laws were necessary for putting us upon something like a par, during the first age at least, with nations having the start of us, by ages, in the race of manufactures, and who began their race, every one of them, and most of them keeping it up, under the strongest protection of laws. Finally, he would have pleaded for them as necessary towards improving the full advantages of a coasting trade that nature had laid out for us, of boundless extent and inexhaustible promise. I am not sure that his patriotism could have hoped for, or his foresight have predicted, the increase under the last head of which your letter gives an account. At the increase he would not have the less rejoiced, as disclosing, besides all other benefits, one of the firm supports of our future naval power.

So far, Mr. Huskisson. How did he strive, how anxiously, how laboriously, to draw out the resources and exalt the grandeur of his own country. Honor for all his opinions, since to these great ends they were all directed. Of public works belonging to the internal improvements of England, upon the broadest scale, he was always the powerful and zealous champion. Multiplied in number, stupendous in construction, as are already such works there, he stopped not. By more common minds it might have been thought that the measure of England's wants in that great department was completely filled up, and that she ought to pause under the magnitude of her past expenditure. Not so, his. Yet he was strictly an economist. Often he checked useless expenditure. He applied the hand of reform to useless offices; he struck with keen and patient diligence, from the statute-book, a thousand useless statutes about trade, all of them an incumbrance upon trade, and some of them still bringing charges upon the revenue. But well considered public works, he viewed as investments for the nation, soon to yield a tenfold increase. Therefore, with a wise forecast, and an elevated conception of his public duties, would he expend money, and liberally, upon such works. Some minds cannot see even what is all around them. He saw not only present objects, but saw into futurity. It was one of his opinions, that England was but beginning her career of opulence and power. Of that great enterprise, the Liverpool and Manchester Rail Road, soon to prove as useful as it is magnificent, he was among the earliest and most confident advisers. Alas, that he should have been the first to perish there!—the scene of his death, and the theatre of his triumph.

I am writing a long letter. It is longer by far than I would have written only a very few weeks ago. Then, I should, in all probability, have contented myself with a simple and private acknowledgment of yours. But now I make it the occasion of something more. It has reached me at a season when we are on the brink, as I believe, of new and difficult times. Thus imbued with an interest greatly augmented, the information you have imparted; and thence it is that I have felt impelled to a more full answer. I believe a general war in Europe to be at hand. I have believed so, since we first knew of the three days fighting in Paris, and their results. Those three days are to throw a new element into the political world, of ultimate good I do not doubt, but of portentous aspect now. The principle of monarchy is not dead. It will, at its own time, put itself against the principle of that memorable fight, the recognition of the new King of the French, side by side with our illustrious Lafayette, notwithstanding. In the most powerful parts of continental Europe, out of France, it is in rank life. In Austria it is inveterate. In Russia



tremendous. In neither country is there any check in general public opinion upon the imperial will, and legions of armed and brave men are the obedient instruments of that will. Both governments, on the principle of arbitrary sway, are administered for all purposes, but especially warlike purposes, with abundant ability. They can, unhappily, plant the array against freedom, in glittering masses and with frightful vigor. The battle somehow, and soon, must be fought. Caution may delay it for a while; but it cannot go off. The interests and passions which the events of those three days put in motion, and the example which they have consecrated, are far too mighty in all that affects thrones, empires, people, to subside without a furious conflict. Even in England, the principle of monarchy is deeply rooted. There, it is sustained by an aristocracy of influence, which never can be overcome in political, any more than in common life, under the present complex system of their government, the monopolizing preferences of their laws, and the state of representation in their House of Commons. With that aristocracy a large portion of the British public, much larger than we think, will, from principle, or dependence, or prejudice, be brought to side; forming together a rich and courageous body, formidable by both these attributes, as well as its intelligence, that will be ready, on very slender prettexts, to fight it out against the principle of the new revolution in France. Though the principle of that revolution was as just as the victory of the three days was brilliant, and though it was magnanimous to defeated royalty, beyond all parallel, it will not escape the frowns of aristocracy. The materials of strife will be aggravated by the shock of conflicting principles. The speech of the ambassador Talleyrand, to King William, (a formulary not new to the ambassador,) and the personal, or even royal virtues, of the King, will not alter the essential nature of things. It is, in fact, the war already begun between popular opinion, on the one side, and ancient and established power on the other, which Mr. Canning, in his speech on the affairs of Portugal, not long before his death, described as in prospect for Europe; and which, once begun, might be expected to be terrible, both by its fierceness and duration. May we, from our distance, and under our equal and happy institutions, keep out of the strife. Candor must admit, that the present administration of our government, as far as the public know, have pursued a conciliating course towards other nations. But a course friendly and conciliatory on our part, is not always a safeguard against trouble. Should Great Britain get into war, she would wage it with more effect than she has ever waged war before. Notwithstanding the occasional depression in some parts of her industry, and distress in some parts of her population, whether from heavy taxation, the growing rivalry to her manufactures in other countries, or her abridged currency from a return to specie, or from a deficient supply in the precious metals, or from whatever other causes arising, which her own statesmen never can settle, we must not suppose that she has been losing ground. Her resources, on the contrary, in defiance of all real or imaginary diminutions, have undergone since 1815, in the aggregate, a vast increase. Her exports, her imports, and her revenue, would be the decisive tests of this assertion, particularly her revenue from excise, which is little short of thirty millions sterling a year, showing a prodigious increase in her power of consumption and payment within. This amount of her excise at present is the more remarkable, as parts of this branch of her revenue system have been repealed since the last war. Her population has been increasing faster than it has ever done. Her towns, even London, enormous as they seemed before, have grown in size, some of them, as London itself, almost beyond belief, whilst new ones have risen up; and, where scarce fifteen years ago you saw, in the country, heaths and commons, wild and sterile, and abode of robbers, you may now turn your eyes upon fields and gardens and manufactories and schools. The quantity of her grain of all kinds raised and sold at



home, has increased greatly with the increasing amount of her manufactures. The whole momentum of her physical and moral power, in short, will be found to have advanced in a ratio, marking for the most part the progress of new, rather than old countries. Her armies and fleets, partaking of the general advancement, will go forth in greater numbers, and under more formidable equipments of all kinds, than heretofore. Her debt will not restrain her a moment from war, after her interest, her ambition, or her pride, begins to urge her on. It is even less than it was in Queen Ann's time, in proportion to her wealth and income. The heresy of defending such a debt would be one thing: to look at it in connexion with her augmented means of revenue and aggression, and free from misconception under these views, is another. If her expenditure be excessive, beyond all example in modern times, so is her power of replenishment. Of the latter, her credit is the consequence and the proof. On this subject I once heard a grave Senator of Britain say what may be here worth repeating. I heard him, and it is not more than six years gone by, thank his God, that his country, having borne the property tax once, could bear it again; which, yielding as it did, fifteen millions sterling a year, would be good, he said, for the interest of at least *three hundred millions more* that might be borrowed, in addition to their present debt of eight hundred millions; and this without adverting to other and new sources of supply. Her government could borrow now from her own subjects more money in a few hours, than all the governments in Europe could borrow from their subjects in the lapse of months, probably years. Even the loans made in other parts of Europe, would be, under the assistance of British capital, directly or remotely afforded, as they have been, more or less, for twenty years past, else they would be small loans in comparison with hers.

If Britain should get into the war, I am induced to believe, however reluctantly, that she would impress our seamen, under a revival of her unwarrantable claim to search the merchant vessels of other nations upon the high seas for her own. Should we get embroiled through this or any other causes to which the belligerent state of Europe would open a fruitful field, then should we begin to see in new lights the true nature of our late policy. Then would be apparent our gain from the protecting system, partially as we have adopted it. I say partially, for it is a misapplication of terms to speak of it as prohibitory, or even rigid, when judged by the example of nations that have gone before us. It may seem strange, after all that has been said about the tariff, yet it is true, that, at this moment, of the amount of foreign merchandise, paying *ad valorem* duty, that we import from all parts of the world, nine-tenths of it come in under duties varying from twelve per cent. to thirty-three and one-third per cent. It is only one-tenth that pays higher, and this tenth does not pay over fifty per cent., and some of it less. Let it be added, that the *ad valorem* articles that we import, exceed generally in the sum of duties collected from them, the articles paying specific duty. Still, we should reap in wealth and strength, to the amount that we have sowed. We should derive the proper value of our manufactures, already flourishing to some extent in woollens, in cotton, in iron; all of which would be immediately and advantageously extended and improved. Then, too, should we begin to see, in new lights, our internal improvements, made at the national cost, for the national benefit. Then should we see how they facilitated our intercourse, cheapened all our defences, augmented all our means. Then should we acknowledge the wisdom of those measures, and wish their execution, that were long since projected for us by able statesmen, by Albert Gallatin and Mr. Calhoun, as fit to be accomplished by the nation's means; measures which looked, and these were not all of them, to the construction of a well finished and durable road from Louisiana to Maine, and to connecting Boston and Savannah by a well estab-



our proper advancement as a nation, due to the destinies to which nature and the glorious freedom of our institutions are beckoning us, if we, the present trustees of them all, do not slumber over and neglect them. We ought to be roused to them, by casting our eyes to the high standard of competition before us in other nations. There is a race going on, in the world, of riches and power, as well as freedom, from which sluggish nations will fall back; out of whose bright course they will be hooted. The prize of the last our fathers won for us, and may it be imperishable. Let us do the rest. They would have expected it of us. Let us raise up, to the proper pitch of social and national exaltation, the country which they gave us. Else shall we be unworthy of such fathers; else will they have done every thing, and we nothing. Shame if we abandon measures of internal improvement, when the good sense of the world is on our side, and after majorities of our own people have repeatedly come to decisions in their favor, on the score both of the Constitution and of expediency. Having begun with them, let us go on, with wisdom as with resolution. They would form the great highway of a profitable traffic to us in peace, and of our most important operations in war. Every year, every day, they would be leading to new developments of our agricultural and mineral products, as our manufacturers are beginning to do; to which they should be as inseparable handmaids, and in conjunction with which, they would every where be enriching and embellishing our land. By the States individually, they will never be done. They cannot be done. Unless the nation does them, they will remain forever undone, to our detriment in peace, and our greater detriment in war. Of such measures, as of all measures for the tariff, a statesman, of our country, yielding in genius to none in either hemisphere, has been the undeviating and master advocate. I can mean none other than Mr. CLAY. Foremost has he been in fighting the battles of the mind, that won the victories of the mind, when these momentous parts of our policy came first under full discussion; and I am the more bound to mention him here, because it is to him that all the first praise of your letter belongs. In transferring it to him, I perform but an act of sheer justice. History, with truth in her hand, cannot fail to give him higher and more durable praise, when the spirit of party shall have passed away.

It is time that I should bring my letter to a close. I have no excuse for its length, but in the nature of yours. Your facts are full of public importance, and it is for this reason that I write about them through the medium of a paper in the town where I live, publishing also your letter. The opinions I have given being those of a private citizen, not delivered from any official seat, may pass for what they are worth, and no more. I have given them with the more freedom, because I am a private citizen. My praise or my blame can be of no account to any one. I am no writer for the newspapers on party subjects; but I do not confound with such discussions the valuable public facts which you have presented to me; and least of all at such a crisis as I believe to be drawing near. I view them as part of a great class of facts, proper to go before the public, and in giving them to that tribunal, I have added as much of comment as seemed to me appropriate, viewed in connexion with the principles and reflections that belong to them. I have done so, not with the passions of a partisan, for I do not feel them, but under truths and convictions that I do feel; and which, feeling, I have expressed without reserve, as, I trust, without indecorum.

Thanking you again for your letter, and with wishes the most sincere for your continued and further prosperity, with which I hold the public prosperity to be identified, I cordially reciprocate your assurances of friendly esteem, and beg to subscribe myself

Your obedient and faithful servant,

RICHARD RUSH.





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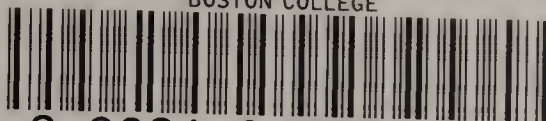
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